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SEP 20 2000

Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Capsule yields snapshot of Baptist past

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

When the weathered cornerstone was removed earlier this year from the old First Church, Biloxi, building on Howard Street for transport to the church's new location on Interstate 10, workmen got a big surprise.

Packed tightly in sand within the cornerstone was a long-forgotten time capsule from the 1924 dedication of the church's Howard Street location.

"None of us were aware that there was a time capsule inside the cornerstone," said pastor Frank Gunn. "We have since found historical notations from various sources that mention the cornerstone and its contents, but we didn't know at the time the cornerstone was removed that there was a time capsule inside."

On the evening of September 3 in the still-unfinished fellowship hall of the church's new Interstate 10 facility, the daughter of the man who headed the Howard Street building project opened the time capsule before more than 500 church members.

Ann Kempkes of Ocean Springs, a member of First Church, Biloxi, pried open the lid of the box to reveal a snapshot of Mississippi Baptist life during the time her father, L.H. Williams, was a prominent church leader and chairman of the building committee for the Howard Street building project.

"It was a great moment. We know from historical research that Mr. Williams placed the time capsule in the cornerstone in 1924. His hands last touched the time capsule, and his daughter's hands were the first to once again reach inside," Gunn said.

Though concern was high that the contents of the time capsule might have been damaged by moisture through the years, Kempkes found the contents perfectly preserved.



A LOOK AT THE PAST — Ann Kempkes (center), a member of First Church, Biloxi, gets an assist from pastor Frank Gunn (right) and deacon chairman Woody Rieffel in opening the 76-year-old time capsule discovered in the cornerstone of the church's Howard Street building. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

Inside the square copper box with heavy lead-soldered joints:

- Property deeds for land on which the church had previously been located in 1885 and 1901, and the 1924 deed for the Howard Street location.

- An American Standard Version Bible belonging to Shelton G. Posey, the pastor at the time of the 1924 relocation.

- A church history dating to 1900.

- A copy of the July 31, 1924 issue of

The Baptist Record newspaper.

- A copy of the August 2, 1924 issue of the Biloxi Daily Herald newspaper.

- Kind Words, a youth publication of the Baptist Sunday School Board.

- An annual from the 85th session of the Mississippi Baptist State Convention, held in 1923 in Corinth.

- Minutes of the 1923 Gulf Coast Association meeting at Long Beach Church, Long Beach.

- A 1924 Southern Baptist Convention annual.

- A pair of 1924 yearbooks for First Church, Biloxi.

There was another church member who held a special interest in the time capsule, Gunn added.

"J.C. Brent, who served on the building committee in 1924 and owned Biloxi Marble Works at the time, supplied the Howard Street cornerstone. His son Bobby, who is a member of the church and now owns the marble works, is supplying the new cornerstone for the Interstate 10 church," Gunn said.

"The inside of the 1924 cornerstone is as polished on the inside as it is on the outside. The dimensions of the time capsule fit perfectly inside the cornerstone," he added.

Gunn said the church is working with the curator of Beauvoir, the Biloxi beachfront home of Confederate President Jefferson Davis, to display the materials at the new church.

"Opening the time capsule brought back the realization of the sacrifices people made to build the 1924 church for those who came after them. It wasn't easy financially to build that church, but they knew they were building for the future."

"The connection we felt with them through the time capsule makes us feel that we too are building for tomorrow and that our sacrifices, like theirs, will be worthwhile," Gunn said.

Miss. CP close to record

Mississippi Cooperative Program (CP) gifts to the work of the Lord for the month of August neared an all-time record, exploding back on track after a summer dip the previous month, according to Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board in Jackson. The August 2000 CP total was \$2,912,792, or 57.58% more than the \$1,848,402 given in the month of July 2000, and \$1,013,603, or 53.37%, higher than the amount given in the same period last year. The August 2000 CP total is the second-highest in Mississippi CP history, behind only January 1997 at \$2,922,651. Gifts for the current fiscal year are \$1,133,779, or 6.2% ahead of last year's record pace. CP gifts to date in the current fiscal year, which runs through December, are \$19,432,346. The CP budget as set by messengers to the 1999 Mississippi Baptist Convention is \$28,083,349.

Mississippi CP helps fund such activities as the Missionary Parents Fellowship at Camp Garaywa in Clinton on September 22-23; the Winter Bible Study Previews in late September at four locations around the state; and the Church Related Vocations banquets in late September and early October at Mississippi Baptists' three institutions of high learning.

SBC CP continues rise

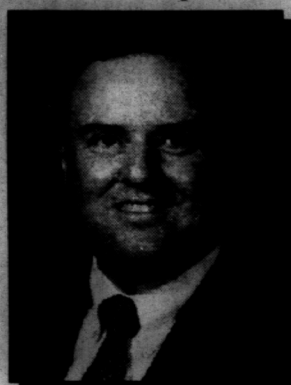
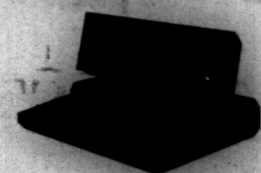
NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — August receipts of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Cooperative Program (CP) were up .77% compared to the same month a year ago, according to Morris H. Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the SBC Executive Committee. In CP gifts, a total of \$14,154,649.93 was received in August to support Southern Baptist missions and ministries globally and across North America, compared to \$14,046,612.76 in August 1999.

For the fiscal year to date, October 1999 through August 2000, CP giving is 5.47% ahead of the same period a year ago, \$162,851,541.96 as compared to \$154,410,331.05.

In designated giving during August 2000, the total of \$3,782,664.98 fell 6.12% below the August 1999 total of \$4,029,330.58. For the fiscal year to date, designated giving remains 7.24% ahead of last year's pace, \$160,171,445.61 as compared to \$149,357,163.33.

For the SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget, the year-to-date receipts of \$162,851,541.96 are \$16,566,444.21 above the budgeted \$146,285,097.75. The monthly receipts showed \$14,154,649.93 received, more than 106% of the budgeted amount of \$13,298,645.25.

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Another brick in the wall

August is the month legalized gambling came to Mississippi. Most people probably overlook that anniversary, what with state-sanctioned gambling now such a major part of our public and private lives and all the talk of tax windfalls and massive job growth.

What has gambling done for Mississippi? Like legalized alcohol, gambling was supposed to make state budget woes a problem of the past. Listen closely this coming January, however, as lawmakers try to convince us the state is broke.

Gambling was supposed to produce an almost infinite amount of high-paying jobs for the state's poorest citizens. Study closely, however, the just-released state government report that proves otherwise.

Worse still is the impact of legalized gambling on the social and cultural fabric of our state. We have all been changed by the advent of legalized gambling, in both subtle and-not-so-subtle ways.

According to the Gambling Problems Resource Center, a survey by the Minnesota state lottery organization asked people to respond to the statement, "I am opposed to gambling for moral or religious reasons."

More than half (56%) of those who answered that they strongly agreed with that statement also admitted to gambling in the previous year.

Would anyone be surprised if a survey of Mississippians turned up similar results? How about a survey of Mississippi Baptists?

The final report of the National Gambling Impact Study Commission, issued in June of last year, noted that:

- in 1998, people who engaged in legalized gambling in the U.S. lost 50 billion of their hard-earned dollars.
- the top five percent of lottery gamblers accounted for 51% of total sales.
- the National Research Council estimates that as many as 1.1 million adolescents between the ages of 12 and 18 exhibited pathological gambling problems in the past year.
- in a recent survey of people living at rescue missions across the U.S., 18% cited gambling as a cause of their homelessness.
- problem gambling affects not only fam-

ilies but has much broader societal and cultural effects, such as increased claims for welfare and unemployment benefits and higher rates of theft, embezzlement, bankruptcy, domestic abuse, and child neglect.

Again, would anyone be surprised if Mississippi statistics mirrored those figures?

Barrett Duke of the Southern Baptist Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission in Nashville points out that Nevada, the showcase of the American gambling industry, has the highest gambling addiction rate, the highest suicide rate, and the highest divorce rate of any of the 50 states.

"These facts should be sufficient to prove to anyone that any place where money is the highest priority, lives are the poorest in quality.

"Today, too many people — including Christians — think that money is the key to a satisfying life, and they are turning to gambling in an attempt to get that money," Barrett says.

Doesn't that sound like a postcard from Mississippi? People who can ill afford to risk their money go without food for days to gamble in the glitzy palaces lining the Mississippi River from north to south and the Gulf Coast from east to west.

Hungry children shiver in locked cars for hours while their parents throw away any hope of a decent future at Mississippi's tables of fortune.

Even some of the state's institutions of higher learning have begun to clamor for their piece of the gambling pie, asking permission from legislators to teach gambling as part of a legitimate degree program.

The most pathetic gambling addicts of all, however, have to be Mississippi taxpayers. We swallowed the politicians' hollow promises that gambling taxes would alleviate all our state's budget problems.

We believed the unproven predictions of high-paying jobs. When we were told,



"He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver" (Ecclesiastes 5:10).

September 17 is Anti-Gambling Sunday

despite Nevada's experiences, Mississippi could avoid the theft, embezzlement, suicide, and broken families that go along with legalized gambling, we accepted their word on blind faith.

Now we're hooked, celebrating another year of gambling in Mississippi. Another year of empty, unfulfilled promises. Another year of tight state budgets. Another year of devastated families. Another year of corrupting influence on our public institutions. Another brick in the wall.

GUEST OPINION:

Lighting a fire into eternity

By Denton Lotz, general secretary
Baptist World Alliance

20th century became known for its dictators, Holocaust, and gulags.

God raised up another Baptist evangelist, Billy Graham, to reawaken the Christian world to the need to evangelize the world in our generation. In 1966, the Berlin Conference on Evangelism was the beginning of a worldwide movement of evangelical Christians from a broad spectrum of denominations to again take up the challenge of world evangelism.

As a young student, I was privileged to be in Berlin and there met Bill Graham and Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie, the opening speaker.

Berlin was the beginning of an evangelical renaissance in world evangelization.

Since then, there have been other world conferences in Lausanne and Amsterdam, but Amsterdam 2000 was Billy Graham's vision for helping all Christians refocus their hearts and minds and work on evangelizing the world in the 21st century.

I believe it was another watershed. With 7,000 "two-thirds world" delegates, obviously the baton has been passed. The two-thirds world evangelists confronted a pagan and secular Western European and North American culture

that seemed without Christ and without hope.

Amsterdam 2000 reminded all Christians that we need one another. We need to work together to lift up Christ in a very hostile and evil world.

Billy Graham's serious call was received with great emotion:

"I do not believe that we should spend our time cursing the darkness. I do not believe we should spend our time on useless controversy, trying to root the tares out while harvesting the wheat. I do not believe that we should give in to the forces of evil and violence and indifference... Instead, let us light a fire — let us light a fire that will banish moral and spiritual blight wherever we go. Let us light a fire that will guide men and women into tomorrow and eternity."

The Southern Baptist Convention is a member of the Baptist World Alliance, an international fellowship of 196 Baptist unions and conventions representing a community of more than 100 million Baptists.

Tanzania 'hunger for God' fuels missions

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) — Sleep became somewhat insignificant to Charles Juma for eight weeks this summer.

Juma and a team of Youth Ministry International students traveled to Tanzania in late May to spread the gospel and train that nation's youth workers. The team left after two weeks, but Juma stayed in the country for another six weeks to do follow-up visits and in-depth training.

He led devotions before sunrise and spoke until well after sunset. He watched as Tanzanians hungry to hear the gospel followed him from town to town. His days were long and grueling, but worth it.

"Each night I would get around four hours [of sleep] — if I had a lot," said Juma, a student at Boyce College, the undergraduate school of Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

"I would go to bed at midnight and wake up at 5 in the morning. Their hunger for God drove me to do what I was doing. They just would not let me rest."

Juma knows Africa well. He grew up in Kenya — a country that borders Tanzania on the eastern coast of the continent — and served as a youth pastor in his home country for eight years before coming to America.

However, even he was surprised by the receptivity of

Tanzanians to the Gospel. A total of 823 first-time decisions for Christ were recorded during Juma's stay there — 680 during the Youth Ministry International's team visit and 143 thereafter.

"There is just an opening in Tanzania like no other place as far as I'm concerned," he said. "People are so receptive to the gospel, and people are just coming to the Lord in an amazing way."

"Even two weeks wasn't enough to do what we were doing there."

Juma began and ended each day with Bible studies for local families. The rest of the day was spent conducting seminars, but his seminar audience wasn't simply youth workers.

Juma and Boyce College student Bill Orange were part of a group of 25 Youth Ministry International workers from various colleges who preached open-air church services and conducted seminars for the first two weeks, teaching youth workers the basics of youth ministry.

The team was led by YMI President and Boyce College professor Randy Smith. Team members conducted training seminars for youth workers for half a day before moving on to another church.

Following the YMI team's departure, Juma made a follow-up visit to each church and conducted a more in-depth, three-day seminar. Three disciples followed him wherever he went and will now teach fellow Tanzanians what they learned under Juma.

Juma began and ended each day with Bible studies for local families. The rest of the day was spent conducting seminars, but his seminar audience wasn't simply youth workers.

Juma often found himself speaking to laypeople who had simply come to hear a biblical message and to ask questions.

On one Sunday, a group of Christians listened to Juma preach and teach from 11 a.m. until 6 p.m. Most of them had not eaten all day.

"They said, 'We're not leaving,' I said, 'You cannot stay here for another two hours.' They said, 'No, we want to be taught.'"

Their hunger for the gospel didn't stop there. Often Juma would arrive in a new town, only to find the same group of people he had just left sitting in the crowd. They had made the 30-45 mile trek via bus to hear more of the Gospel preached — even though Juma was teaching the same lesson at each stop.

Everyone, though, was not initially receptive to Juma's message. Juma had a late-night encounter with a man who had a Catholic background and was very hostile to the gospel during his last week in Tanzania.

"He was very argumentative," Juma said. "He would not even let me speak."

Juma decided to take a more basic approach.

"I said, 'If I brought the Bible here and opened it for you and give you verses and passages to read, would you still argue with that?' He said, 'No.'"

Juma pointed out several verses, and the man said he understood each one.

"I was tired. It was about midnight, and all of the family members were sitting there," Juma said. "They were quiet. I

Record

MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

THE
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FRONT PAGE

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Vatican: Protestants 'deficient'

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — A Vatican document issued Sept. 5 won't sit well with Southern Baptists and other evangelicals and Protestants. As described in the lead paragraph of a Washington Post story, it "declares that individuals can attain full salvation from earthly sin only through the spiritual grace of the Catholic Church and that other faiths — including Protestant Christian ones — have defects that place their followers in a 'gravely deficient situation' in seeking salvation."

The 36-page Vatican document was released at a news conference in Rome by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the principal Vatican body for defining and upholding theological tradition. Vatican officials said the document has the explicit approval of 80-year-old Pope John Paul II.

Titled "Declaration Dominus Iesus [Lord Jesus] ... On the Unity and Salvific Universality of Jesus Christ and the Church," the document asserts:

- "This truth of faith does not lessen the sincere respect that the [Catholic] Church has for the religions of the world," but it "rules out, in a radical way, ... the belief that one religion is as good as another."

- Non-Catholic Christian churches "suffer from defects," partly because they do not recognize the authority of the pope, but they "have by no means been deprived of significance and importance in the mystery of salvation."

- Other Christian denominations are not "churches in the proper sense," but their members are, through baptism, "in a certain communion, albeit imperfect, with the [Catholic] Church."

Looking back

10 years ago

A team of Mississippi Baptist women depart for Peru, where they will lead workshops for women in Lima, Pura, Chiclayo, Trujillo, Cajamarca, and Arequipa. The Mississippians are Bobbie Foster of Prentiss; and Vickie Heath, Ashley McCaleb, and Janey Murray, all of Jackson.

20 years ago

Woodland Hills Church, Jackson, celebrates its 50th year in ministry by topping off the church's bell tower with a long-awaited steeple. The bell tower was originally designed to accommodate the steeple, but a World War II construction delay and finances put the project on the back burner.

50 years ago

The Department of Temperance Activities at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board celebrates a pair of victories over liquor forces. Voters in the cities of Oxford and Picayune — on opposite ends of the state — crush beer referendums by large majorities.

CML Conference to convene in Madison

The 29th Annual Church Media Library (CML) Conference will be held October 6-7 at First Church, Madison.

"Mississippi Baptists who are involved in any facet of the ministry of the church media library are encouraged to attend," said Farrell Blankenship, director of the Department of Broadcast Services, at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board in Jackson.

The focus for 2000-2001 is "Media Libraries... Ministry of One," by allowing God to make a difference in the lives of others one

person at a time.

Conference leaders include three national specialists, with the Church Media Program, at LifeWay Christian Resources in Nashville:

- Rita Kirkland of Euless, Texas.

- Sue Berthelot, of Gonzales, La.

- Eva Nell

Hunter of Decatur, Ala.

Additional conference leaders are:

- Sandra Fitts, media library director, at First Church, Corinth, and associational media ministry director for Alcorn Association in Corinth.

- Suzanne Burton, senior account manager for Book Systems, Inc., in Huntsville, Ala.

- Hope Winter Ferguson, approved worker for the Church Media Program at LifeWay.



Kirkland



Berthelot



Hunter



Fitts

Management: Deskbook taught by Hope Ferguson.

- Ready, Set, Automate, Preparing Media for Circulation and Ministry of CML taught by Sandra Fitts.

- Timesavers for Librarians, Classifying

Using Dewey, Choosing and using Sears Subject Headings taught by Eva Nell Hunter.

- Collecting and Preserving Your Church's History and The Book Doctor: Care and Repair of Books taught by Sue Berthelot.

The October 6 after-dinner speaker will be author Gilbert

Courses being offered this year are:

- I'm a New Worker: What Do I Need to Know? CML Administration, and Media Selection taught by Rita Kirkland.

- Concourse MLS for Beginning Users, Concourse MLS for Experienced Users, and Concourse MLS Question and Answers taught by Suzanne Burton.

- Special Ministries of CML, Promotion Design-Print, and Media Library



Burton



Ferguson

Morris of Gulf Shores, Ala., presenting an inspiring interpretation of the "Ministry of One" on Saturday morning will be Jim

Futral, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Featured again this year is the "sampler" entitled "Tricks, Tips, and Other Helpful Stuff," which will start at 7 p.m. on October 6.

Suggested motels are Cabot Lodge, 120 Dyess Rd., Phone: (601) 957-0757; Comfort Inn, 5709 I-55 North, Phone: (601) 206-1616; Fairfield Inn, 5723 I-55 North, Phone: (601) 957-8557; and Hampton Inn, 465 Briarwood Dr., Phone: (601) 956-3611.

Attendees must make their own lodging reservations. Ask for Church Media Library Conference, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board rate.

Registration fee is \$12.50 per person, which includes lunch and dinner at the church on October 6 and conference materials. Reservations are needed. Make checks payable to Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and mail to Broadcast Services/CML, P. O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530.

The conference begins on October 6 with registration at 9 a.m. and concludes at 8 p.m. The conference on October 7 begins at 8 a.m. and concludes at noon.

For more information contact the Broadcast Services Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board at (601) 292-3378 or toll-free at (800) 748-1651, ext. 378.

A WORD FILTER

Filters are big business in America. If you just started to add up all the money that you spend on filters you would probably be shocked! Just think about them: air filters, oil filters, coffee filters, water filters, Internet filters, TV filters, noise filters, leaf filters, and on and on. If something is on planet earth it is almost guaranteed to get filtered. Though I have not seen one, it would probably be advantageous to most of us if there was such a thing as a "word filter."

Not long ago I was talking with a pastor who had written an article for his weekly church newsletter. He had hurriedly written it on Monday morning and dashed it off to be published. In the heat of emotion and disappointment over some incidents of the previous day, he jotted down his feelings and sent them on their way. Soon he forgot about the article and went on with other things that grabbed his attention during the week. Toward the end of the week, when the mail came, he picked up the article and began to read it. He was telling me that it sure looked different after a few days of consideration and thought.

On reflection, he not only regretted some of the things he had written, but he recognized that there were some things that he should not have said and other things that could have been said far better. I told him that is one of the reasons I usually write my articles days or weeks in advance — time is a good filter! I do not and



Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

Directions

cannot always write days or weeks ahead, but invariably, if I can, it gives me opportunity to think through, see things from various angles, and allow new thoughts to pass in, through, and around my mind at several different, emotional levels.

One day I may feel pretty good about myself, and another day not feel so hot. One day I may feel strong and excited about an event, and another day not be so charged up. Somehow there is a balance that is struck in the midst of all of it as you realize what you said and you are able to reflect upon the impact that it will have on others at various stages and with various needs in life.

I'm confident that all of us could profit by slowing down our response mechanism to a respectable level, especially at those times when anger is involved which pushes our thought processes outside of the normal limits. At those moments, when we speak or write, we are usually outside of the territory of our real self, and then hours or days later, we regret it. At those times we are reminded of the impossibility of "un-ringing" a bell, or "un-shooting" an arrow.

The Scripture speaks clearly to this issue when it says, "My beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath" (James 1:19). It is God's filter for our words. If we take God's Word seriously and follow its guiding principles, it enables us to speak after we have filtered an item or an issue through our hearts and minds at several different stages. Why is that important? Why not just speak your mind and go on about your business? Well, for one thing, minutes, hours, or days later, you may have additional information that you wish you had had before you spoke — a bit of information that would have changed your perspective about things — just one little insight that changes your understanding. It is possible that what you blow a fuse about at one moment, you may actually come to understand and applaud.

It is amazing how just one little tidbit of information changes everything. If I were to ask the question, "How many of you would jump out of an airplane without a parachute for one million dollars?" most of you would reply, "Not me!

Not on your life!" If I finished that question, "How many of you would jump out of an airplane without a parachute if it was sitting on the runway?" you would immediately say, "Count me in!" Just one small piece of information and you see things differently.

The fact is that if you are slow to speak and slow to wrath, you might even find that you feel differently about yourself! Not just the ideas, but yourself! For the Christian it is important for us to follow the guidelines of God's Word because if we do, God has promised the Holy Spirit to guide us — to shape our thoughts, our temperament, and our feelings and to enable us to control our emotions and our expressions. It is far easier to pause and thank God for what you did not say than it is to try to take back what you said in an uncontrollable rage.

God promises to us his guidance — a "filter." It is interesting to think through the life of Jesus with all of its challenges and trials, with all of the accusations and emotions, and to note that Jesus never had to say, "I wish I hadn't said that!"

While we cannot order a "word filter" from Lifeway Christian Resources or buy one at some seminar we attend, we can have one installed deep in our hearts in our quiet time with God. There is a time to speak and a time to be silent.

May God grant us the wisdom and the courage to know which is which, and when to act.

Prosperity based on longer hours

WASHINGTON (BP) — A study by the Economic Policy Institute in Washington indicates that American economic prosperity over the last decade has been spurred by more family members working longer hours and not just rising wages.

The union-supported think tank found that an average middle-class family's income rose by 9.2%, after inflation, from 1989-98. The study also found that family members spent 6.8 percent more time at work to reap the income increase.

Government figures show that while the average full-time worker's workweek has remained fairly steady at about 43 hours, the share of married women working full-time rose from 41% in 1989 to 46% in 1998.

The statistics, based on Labor Department figures, are part of a biennial report, "The State of Working America," to be published in January.

Wedgwood shootings ignored as hate crime

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — On the one-year anniversary of the Wedgwood Church shootings, many Christians remain troubled why the tragedy has not been officially classified as a hate crime and why it has not received more attention from elected leaders and the media.

The ABC broadcasting network's website, for example, displayed 705 results when searching for the Columbine High School shootings, 142 on the school shootings in Paducah, Ky.; and five on Wedgwood, including one on "Nightline."

The Nightline program failed to mention the abusive, anti-Christian words Ashbrook shouted. Instead, it was reported that "Ashbrook calmly conducted his assault."

Meanwhile, Peggy Wehmeyer, ABC's religion reporter, aired a sound bite from religious radio talk show host Marlin Maddoux "reporting that some feel they are increasingly targeted by anti-Christian bigotry," according to Brent Bozell of the Internet news site CNSNews.com.

Wehmeyer herself, in a Baptist Press interview, said, "This story certainly has not received the attention it deserved."

Bozell further stated in a Sept. 23, 1999, column, "So why, despite mounting evidence from Fort Worth, and Paducah, and Littleton before that, are Christians not now victims of 'hate crimes'? Some media outlets — such as CBS, CNN, and Time — apparently believe, to paraphrase Orwell's 'Animal Farm,' that some 'hate crimes' are more equal than others."

Both the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Fort Worth Police Department have concluded that the Wedgwood murders were not officially hate crimes.

The FBI, charged by Congress to keep annual statistics on hate crimes, did not even open a case, Lori Bailey, special agent at the FBI's Dallas office, told Baptist Press.

While an FBI team from Dallas did go to Fort Worth to help gather evidence, Bailey said the decision against classifying it as a hate crime "was made jointly in Dallas with the FBI headquarters in D.C. and the Department of Justice."

Asked whether strong consideration was ever given to declare the Wedgwood tragedy a hate crime, Bailey said, "It was a strong consideration, but it was not the appropriate route to go" because "[killer Larry Gene Ashbrook's] statements would not cause us to investigate it as a civil rights matter."

FBI agents did view two videotapes from Wedgwood that captured all the horror after Ashbrook entered the worship center where a youth rally was underway.

Robert Garrity, FBI special agent in charge, said, "[T]his has the appearance of being a very troubled man who... sought to quiet whatever demons that bothered him. I think he was just somebody who was a social outcast. We found evidence that he was a very emotionally disturbed person."

However, once out of the hands of the FBI, the case became even more unlikely to

be classified as a hate crime since Texas is one of only two states with a general hate crimes law that does not identify specific victim groups.

The Wedgwood case "was not a hate crime," said Lt. David Burgess, public information officer for the Fort Worth Police Department. "We could find nothing that said he was after a particular group, that we could tell. He [Ashbrook] did not say, 'I'm looking for Baptists or Christians to kill.'"

Fort Worth Police Chief Ralph Mendoza speculated that the death of Ashbrook's father in July 1999 "may have driven him over the edge."

Longtime neighbors are reported to have said such comments as, "After [his mother] died, he went mental" nine years earlier and "He just didn't seem right in the head."

While nothing was found on Ashbrook himself or in his house that "had any connection with a hate group," said Deputy Fort Worth Police Chief Don Gerland, and no reference to Wedgwood Church was found in Ashbrook's journals or other writings in his house, he did unmistakably say anti-Christian phrases in the church Sept. 15.

Ashbrook's words are recorded both on videotape and in the minds of every person in the room that horrible night. The tapes have been destroyed, upon agreement between the church and the police department, but multiple witnesses said they heard Ashbrook say, "I can't believe you believe this junk" and heard him shouting anti-Baptist rhetoric and cursing God.

According to Fort Worth police, Ashbrook's actions possibly stemmed from schizophrenia. "This man had some mental problems and had made some sad comments in the church," Burgess said, "but nothing was said that could be considered a hate crime."

Christian outcry against the perceived prejudice began quickly. On Sept. 18, 1999, the Los Angeles Times carried the first of several national articles with reference to evangelicals' concerns after the FBI failed to open a case on Wedgwood.

The next day, the Washington Post wrote: "The murderous rampage last week at a Texas Baptist church exemplified the rising hostility toward Christians in America and abroad and inexplicable reluctance to recognize the shooting as a religious hate crime, national evangelical leaders say."

Will Norton, dean of the college of journalism at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and an evangelical Christian, said, "My general feeling is that if there was prejudice, it's not the media's fault. It's society's fault."

"[Wedgwood] people responded so graciously, kindly. In our society, that's not news. It takes an exceptional reporter to see that as news. There would have been more coverage if there had been displays of anger and bitterness, but here we had people coping. The secular media couldn't grasp what a great story that was."

Norton is also a former faculty member in the department of journalism at the University of Mississippi in Oxford.

Crusade 2000 to kick off Sept. 24

Crusade 2000 will be held at the Franklin High School football stadium in Meadville on September 24-27. Services each night will begin with special music at 6:30 p.m., followed by worship service at 7 p.m. The evangelist will be James E. Messer, a Columbia native who currently serves as staff evangelist at Crypress Shores Church in Mobile, Ala.

Themes for each night are:

- September 24 — Old Time Gospel Night, with special music by the Bibletones of Gulfport.

- September 25 — Music and the Master, with special music by the Veal Brothers from southwest Mississippi.

Rick Stanley, Elvis Presley's step-brother, will share his testimony of drug and alcohol abuse and his life-changing experience with Jesus Christ.

- September 26 — God and Country, featuring Marty Raybon, former member of the group Shenandoah.

- September 27 — Youth Night. Motivational speaker Barrin Simpson will share his testimony.

A nursery will be provided at Meadville Church, three blocks from the stadium, for ages birth to five years.

Children ages six to 12 can attend the Children's Ministry each night at 6:30 p.m. in the high school's gymnasium, located adjacent to the stadium, for a time of fun and ministry with Lee Pitts and her puppet Nicky.

For more information, contact crusade president Webb Armstrong at (601) 384-2035.

Blind hymn writer is music evangelist's passion

NAPLES, Fla. (BP) — Time has obscured the legacy of Fanny Crosby, who, though blind, penned more than 8,000 hymns — but music evangelist and dramatist Darlene Neptune is determined to reintroduce Crosby to today's congregations.

"It was the day I visited her grave that the urgency began to build inside me to tell the story," said Neptune, of First Church, Naples, Fla. "I had been studying her life and writing the drama for over four years and had put things on hold; now it was time."

Neptune travels to churches and seminaries throughout the United States sharing Crosby's personal life with a generation that is familiar with the hymns, but not the hymn writer.

Donning wire-rimmed sunglasses, gray hair and a 1800s-style dress, Neptune performs a 90-minute drama about Crosby's life. She sits in a wooden rocking chair, bringing to life the personality of Crosby, drawing from the hymn writer's autobiography and newspaper interviews for dialogue. She discusses Crosby's childhood, the inspiration for many of Crosby's hymns and Crosby's passion for the homeless.

Neptune also performs several of Crosby's well-known hymns, including "Blessed Assurance," "Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior" and "Rescue the Perishing."

Neptune has produced a short video of her drama and recorded an album of the hymns.

Currently, Neptune is writing an in-depth study about the life and character of Crosby. Francis Jane Crosby was born in 1820.



Darlene Neptune

Blinded as a baby, Crosby spent the first half of her life as a poet. After her 40th birthday, Crosby began writing songs for the publishing firm of Bigelow & Main, earning \$2 per song.

She wrote under nearly 100 pseudonyms to hide the fact she was the publishing firm's only songwriter.

Crosby associated with such personalities as Presidents John Quincy Adams, Andrew Jackson, Abraham Lincoln, and Grover Cleveland. She also knew Jenny Lind, the "Swedish Nightingale" brought to America by P.T. Barnum; Henry Clay; and William Cullen Bryant.

Neptune notes that biographer Bernard Ruffin said Fanny Crosby "in her day, was considered by most people to be the greatest (hymn writer) in America. As Johann Strauss reigned in Vienna as the 'Waltz King,' and John Philip Sousa in Washington as the 'March King,' so Fanny Crosby reigned in New York in the later 19th and early 20th century as the 'Hymn Queen.'"

Crosby died in 1915, just two weeks shy of her 95th birthday, at her home in Bridgeport, Conn.

Neptune began studying Crosby's life in 1992. After examining Crosby's interviews and songs, Neptune said she believes that she truly knows Fanny Crosby — a knowledge, along with the Lord, "urging me on, showing me things in her life and the songs that she wants me to find."



Andrew Chapel Church, Brandon, recently held a surprise appreciation day in honor of their pastor's wife, Jo Ann Laird. She was recognized during the morning worship hour for her faithful service to the church during the 12 years she and J.T. Laird have been at the church. A covered dish meal was held following the service. Pictured (from left) are Robin Miles, Laird, Ruth Ulrich, and Karla Graham.

hosted a cookout for Keyser and his wife Jeanette, is church organist. They also presented the Keyzers with a money shirt.

The "Just Older Youth" group honored the Keyzers with a senior adult luncheon on Aug. 22 and presented them with a monetary gift. The Four R's, a musical group organized by the Keyzers, sang and played.

On Aug. 27 the entire church honored the Keyzers with a church-wide covered dish luncheon. They were presented with a Book of Memories and a Money Tree.

Gunter Road Church, Florence, ordained Jody Coleman and Craig Dukes as deacons on Sunday, Aug. 27. Pictured (from left) are Coleman; Gene Jordan, pastor; and Dukes.

Jim Keyser retired from First Church, Calhoun City, on Aug. 31. Keyser served as minister of music at First Church for 21 years, serving 18 of those years in senior adult ministry.

On July 24 the senior adult Hallelujah Chorus



Coleman, Jordan, and Dukes



Erkhart and Cook

(601) 945-2527. Pictured (from left) are Erkhart and Jim Cook Jr., pastor.



Turner and Dukes

Gunter Road Church, Florence, presented Alana Turner (left) and Katelyn Dukes (right) with their charm bracelets for completing World Venture I in GAs on Sunday, Aug. 6.

First, Benndale: Sept. 18-22; 7 p.m.; Dale Thrasher, Winnfield, La., evangelist; Jim Cook Jr., pastor.

Calvary, Canton: Sept. 17-20; Sunday, 10:15 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Don Lum, consultant, Evangelism Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, evangelist; Scott Jones, Chip Wilbanks, and Tim Ruth, music; Don Lum, interim pastor.

Liberty (Mississippi): Sept. 17-20; Sunday, 11 a.m., covered dish lunch, and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., noon and 7 p.m.; Billy Smith, Madison, evangelist; Phillip Willis, Baton Rouge, La., music; Martin Hayden, pastor.

Westwood, Meridian: Sept. 24-27; Sun. 10:30 a.m. and 5 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Terry Williams, Waynesboro, evangelist; Chris Lee, Meridian, music; Richard Davis, pastor.

Williamsville, Kosciusko: Sept. 24-27; Sunday, 10:45 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; S.A. "Sonny" Adkins, director, Evangelism Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, evangelist; Scott Adkins, worship leader; Jerry W. East, pastor.

Cedar View, Olive Branch: Sept. 24-27; Sunday, 11 a.m., followed by lunch; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Desi Ginn, evangelist; David Luncford, music.

Bethel, Brandon: Sept. 17-21; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 5 p.m.; Mon.-Thu., 7 p.m.; David Allen, guest speaker; Jasper Butler, music; David Howell, pastor.

Whitesand Church, Prentiss: Sept. 17-21; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Thurs., 10 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mike Miller, Columbiana, Ala., guest speaker; Ken Hedgepeth, Hattiesburg, music; Stan Cheatham, pastor.

Gospel Music Jubilee set for September 16

Big Springs Church, Brookhaven, will host a Gospel Music Jubilee beginning at 2 p.m. on September 16, featuring The Beesons, Answered Prayer, and Redemption. Admission is free, and BBQ chicken dinners will be available as a fundraiser for the church's baptismal building program.



Derma Church, Calhoun Association, ordained Billy Wayne Parker Jr. as deacon on Aug. 6. Pictured (from left) are Chris Aldridge, pastor, and Parker.

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Youth of County Line Church, Pototoc Association

Youth of County Line Church, Pontotoc Association, painted the new storage building for Tishomingo Association. Taking part in the mission project (pictured) are Shawn Easley; Dianne Cobb; Ryan Killough; Eric Long; Adam Holley; Blake Long; Trae Luttrell; Laurin Lauderdale; Wesley Sprayberry; Jason Watts; Kristin Lauderdale; Valeri Hood; Chelsea Killough; Ashley Lauderdale; Rick Garrison, youth director; and Wayne Cobb, pastor.

Reaching Higher Ground will be held Sept. 22-23 at First Church, Starkville. The seminar will feature Jim and Kaye Johns of Prayerpower Ministries, Dallas, Tex., and authors of the Praying to Make a Difference video series. Dinner will be held Friday from 6-7 p.m. followed by sessions from 7-9:30 p.m. Coffee and doughnuts will be available Saturday at 8:30 a.m. followed by sessions from 9 a.m.-noon. A nursery will be provided. Call the church office at (662) 323-5633 to register for this free seminar.

Heisman Reunion 2000 will be held at Wheeler Grove Church, Corinth, Saturday Sept. 30 at 7:30 p.m. with special guests the Crossway Quartet.

The youth group from Spring Cottage Church, Columbia, under the leadership of Jamie Singley, recently went on a mission trip to Jamestown, Ky. They participated in door-to-door visitation inviting the people to attend Bible School and revival services to be held the following week. While there they witnessed several professions of faith and rededications. Brad Ford is pastor of Spring Cottage Church.



Youth of Spring Cottage Church, Columbia

Highland Church, Crystal Springs, hosted a Hawaiian Luau on June 10 for the 1st-6th grade GAs. During the month of June the girls studied about Hawaii and the missionaries who serve there. Upon their arrival to the luau, they were greeted by their leaders and other volunteers, who placed on them beautiful leis, flower bracelets, and hula skirts, which were all handmade by the girls at the church prior to the luau. Pictured (from left, back row) are Lisa Wade, leader; Jennifer Turner; Jessica McDonald; Lauren McGee; Stephanie Rutledge; Cheyenne Bates; Mandy Pollock; Brittany Brock; Jessica Parrish; Jesse Wade; Lyndsey Rials; Ann Rials, leader; Angie McGee, leader; (center row)

Megan Wade; Shelby Jones; Samantha Parrish; Cassie Kees; Victoria Granger; (front row) Kristen Lenard; Hailey Spears; Kristen Aldridge; and Jessica McDonald.

Pass Road Church, Gulfport, will hold Pastor Edgar Jackson Day on Sept. 24 as they commemorate his retirement after 43 years in the ministry, 18 of which were at Pass Road Church. The morning service will be followed by a reception from 2-4 p.m. in the fellowship hall. Please mail personal best wishes for Jackson to 208 Pass Road, Gulfport, MS 39507.

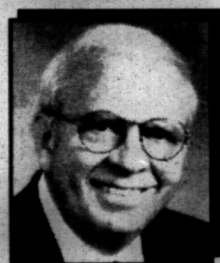


GAs of Highland Church, Crystal Springs

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SYATP concerns clarified by SBC leaders

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP) — As students across the United States make plans for the annual See You at the Pole (SYATP) prayer rallies Sept. 20, the heads of three Southern Baptist entities are reminding pastors that the event is completely within constitutional bounds.

In light of confusion possibly generated by the U.S. Supreme Court's recent ruling in Santa Fe Independent School District v. Doe, the three SBC entities are taking the "unprecedented step" of communicating with every Southern Baptist church on the issue with a mass postcard mailing, directing church staffs to SBC websites that feature a detailed letter that asserts that prayer and Bible study groups in public schools are "entirely legal and constitutional."

The postcard, which is being mailed Sept. 8, says students have every right to pray and share their faith on school campuses.

"It is time for Southern Baptist leaders, pastors and students to join together in taking prayer back to our high school campuses," declares the letter, jointly signed by James T. Draper Jr., president of LifeWay Christian Resources; Richard Land, president of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission; and Robert E. Reccord, presi-

dent of the North American Mission Board.

Acknowledging the "general hostility of our culture and courts to anything religious in the public square," the letter says the "Supreme Court has left open a window of opportunity for student-led and student-initiated prayer and Bible study in our public schools."

"Nothing in any court decisions or American law," Land told Baptist Press, "precludes students from sharing their faith with other students, bringing their Bible to school, or expressing their religious beliefs in any school venue where students are encouraged to share their opinions and concerns, such as in a class discussion, class presentation, or writing assignment."

Reccord said, "We want to assure this and future generations the joy and freedom to not only live out their beliefs, but to share those beliefs without discrimination or persecution in the church house or the school house."

Evangelism and prayer on public school campuses is not only a right guaranteed under the Constitution but a biblical obligation that the church is not fulfilling, the three insist in the letter, noting that as a percentage of total baptisms in SBC churches in 1999, the number of 12- to 17-

year-olds baptized is "the lowest in Southern Baptist recorded history."

"We must redouble our efforts as a Convention to reach the lost students on high school campuses through the local church," the three executives write, pointing out that students are not required to set aside their rights to freely express their faith when they go to school.

Southern Baptist churches need to be praying for the schools in their communities, Draper told Baptist Press.

Draper said he was pleased that LifeWay had a part in developing the school prayer packet, voicing hope that the material would help "students, student leaders and pastors know the legal ways that prayer and the free exercise of religion can be practiced in our public schools."

The letter from the SBC executives and related materials can be accessed online at either www.LifeWay.com, www.namb-net/schoolprayer or www.erlc.com.

To receive a copy of the material by mail, call the ERLC at (615) 244-2495. The ACLJ can be reached at (757) 226-2489 or www.aclj.org and the Christian Legal Society's RLA at (703) 642-1070, ext. 3502, or www.ChristianLegalSociety.org.



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(*I have sinned.*)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death.
(*I repent.*)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you.
(*I believe in Jesus.*)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with him.
(*I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.*)

But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name (John 1:12).

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

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FOLLOW PAUL'S DIRECTION

Editor:

Like many Caucasians, I did not understand why Rev. Jesse Jackson and many others cast doubt on the death of Raynard Johnson, especially when three autopsies indicated suicide.

However, a recent experience at a restaurant helped me realize why so many are suspicious of us.

I was seated reading my newspaper and enjoying a good breakfast when an older white man entered and sat on a stool near me.

Noticing the newspaper he asked if there was anything in it about the boy who was hung. I pointed to the article which quoted a white girl who was a family friend.

The man then said they should hang her, too.

Startled at his coldness I said, "No one should die that way."

He replied, "It's in the Bible." I responded, "name one verse." After his silence I continued and said, "It's only your prejudice which makes you that way."

As long as we have folks who believe it is OK to hurt and kill people who are different, there will be outsiders and insiders who will look with suspicion on events which have been used in the past to intimidate people.

Worse yet are Baptists who are more concerned about protecting their personal right to display a controversial flag which alienates people than they are in following Paul's direction not to do anything

which might offend or keep someone from coming to Christ (1 Cor. 10:32-33).

Steve Owens
Brandon

THANKS, MISS. BAPTISTS

Editor:

On June 26, Oakland Heights Church in Meridian lost over one-fourth of its educational space to an accidental fire. As those of you who have been through a fire know, it feels like more than brick and wood when you are standing there watching it burn—but you also know that God is able to make all things work together for good.

The very next day we were receiving offers of help from sister churches in our city. It was amazing to see how closely-knit God's people can be when one of them is in trouble. Perhaps my greatest surprise came when our associational director of missions, Wayne Edwards, told me that our state convention might be able to help provide some monetary help as well. As it turned out, we received \$2,500 from our fellow Mississippi Baptists.

Yes, we have insurance but even the best policies don't cover all the loss. It sure made a difference in our situation that

our state convention could provide these funds.

Thanks, Mississippi Baptists. Your giving has been a blessing to us. Thanks also to the thoughtful and insightful Baptist leaders in our state who made such provisions for churches when they are in need.

Once again, I'm proud to be a Mississippi Baptist!

Mike Russell, pastor
Oakland Heights Church
Meridian

Editor's Note: The gift provided to Oakland Heights Church by Mississippi Baptists came from the Margaret Lackey State Mission Offering.

GOD'S PROCESS

Editor:

Thank you for publishing, and Mr. Williams for writing, the September 7 Guest Opinion, "What's the Problem With Evolution?" It is time for conservative Christians to accept the well-proven concepts of science and realize that they are neither anti-God nor anti-Christian.

The scientific method involves theories which are tested over and over. When a theory has withstood thousands of tests over a long period of time, it is

considered a fact. The current methods for determining the age of the earth fall into this category as do the principles of natural selection, modern genetic theory, atomic theory, cell theory, etc. The scientific facts show:

- the earth to be very old (4.6 billion years) and the universe much older.

- that all living things have a common genetic make-up and, hence, a common origin.

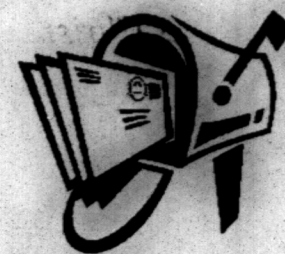
- that man is related to other organisms through this genetic system.

Does this mean that one cannot accept the concepts of evolution and be a Christian? Not if we believe Rom. 10:9.

Does this mean that a footnote which someone added to the Bible several hundred years ago, saying that the earth was created in 4004 B.C., is more accurate than the record found in the rocks—the record which God has allowed modern science to interpret?

As young people approach school this fall, will their faith be weakened by their science studies? Not if we tell them that "God did it," and that through science we are gradually discovering the process—and a marvelous process it is!

Prentiss G. Cox
Clinton



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

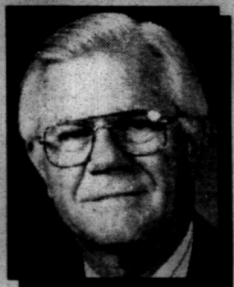
Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.

STAFF CHANGES

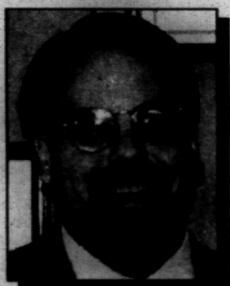
Clayton Pope has retired from Lakeshore Church, Jackson, after eight years in music and senior adult work there. He and his wife Catherine were honored with a reception on Aug. 27. Clayton is available for supply, revival, and interim work. Pope



Pope

may be contacted at 101 Kennesaw Cove, Madison, MS 39110; telephone (601) 898-0906.

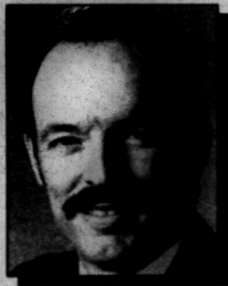
Linwood Church, Neshoba Association, has called Jeff Mann as pastor effective June 4. Mann is a graduate of William C. Carey



Mann

College, and Southeastern Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C. He previously served Liberty Church, Smith Association.

Dee DeBold is available for pulpit supply. He pastored full time for 20 years and has been involved in bi-vocational ministry for six years. He has served churches in Mississippi and the pioneer mission field in Pennsylvania. DeBold may be reached at (601) 587-7806 or (601) 587-4679.



DeBold

Wheeler Grove, Corinth: Oct. 1; 10:30 a.m.; special music by The Heismen; Kara Blackard, pastor.

Foxworth, Foxworth: Oct. 1; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; lunch in the fellowship hall at noon; Ladell Blanton, former pastor, guest speaker; James Walters, pastor.

Antioch, Union: Sept. 24; 11 a.m.; lunch in fellowship hall at noon; 1:30 p.m., Believer's Quartet; James Young, pastor, speaker.

Pilgrim's Rest, Kosciusko: September 17; 10:30 a.m.; covered dish lunch at noon; Bill Hales, former missionary to West Africa, guest speaker; Walter Hines, pastor.

Hope (Neshoba): Sept. 24; 10:30 a.m.; covered dish lunch following services; Jerry Jones, former pastor, speaker.

Rocky Point, Carthage: Sept. 24; 10:45 a.m.; lunch in fellowship hall at noon; Don Cook, evangelist.

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| Gulfshore staffers close successful season



Staff members at Gulfshore Assembly (GBA) in Pass Christian recently wrapped up another successful camping season at the Mississippi Baptist Convention's campground, which employs 50 college students as groundskeepers, lifeguards, food servers, and housekeepers to provide services to the more than 7,500 campers who attend Gulfshore training conferences.

Pictured (with hometowns and schools) from left, front row: Jessica Johnson, Liberty, University of Southern Mississippi (USM); Laura Love Williams, French Camp, Mississippi State University (MSU); Danielle Smith, Seminary, Jones County Junior College (JCJC); Susan Irby, Pisgah, teacher at Pisgah Elementary School; Marie

University of Mississippi Medical Center; Andy Wayne Chance, Silver Creek, MSU; Jill Edwards, Quitman, MSU; Amber Oberst, Petal, MC; Jennie Price, Crystal Springs, MC; Ashley Minyard, Winona, University of Mississippi (UM); Jessi Parker, Bruce, MSU; Emily Wallace, Purvis, USM; Krista

Bryant, Richton, JCJC; Lindsay Curry, Petal, USM; Rachael Sullivan, Okolona, MSU; Terri Mayo, Ethel, MSU; Rebekah Carter, Maryville, Tenn., Mississippi College (MC);

Second row: Jay Thomason, Carrollton, MC; Carla Smith, Tupelo, USM; Eric Baker, Tupelo, I t a w a m b a Community College; Kara Joy Christy, Senatobia, Northwest Mississippi Community College; Andrew Strehlow, Brookhaven, MSU; Jonathan Harvey, Monticello, MC; Paige Purvis, Pelahatchie, USM; Lacy Stokes, DeKalb, USM; Kristen Stewart, Picayune, USM; Brent Newberry, Ocean Springs, MC;

Third row: Chaney Emfinger, Natchez,

Feinberg, Pascagoula, MC; Janalee Shadburn, Corinth, MC; Sheri Pape, Jackson, MSU;

Fourth row: Wesley Anderson, Laurel, JCJC; Jim Blake, Starkville, East Central Community College (ECCC); Sam Taylor, Magee, USM; Kristi Cowart, Lucedale, MSU; Heather Martin, Florence, Montana, Florence Carlton High School; Duncan Tucker, Columbia, William Carey College; Grant Douglas, Brookhaven, Copiah-Lincoln Community College; Jessica Singleton, Ocean Springs, MSU; Elijah Beaver, Mobile, Ala., Baylor University, Waco, Tex.; Bevin Reiger, Pearl, ECCC; Jessica Chrestman, Tupelo, UM;

Fifth row: Ben Skipper, Shuqualak, New Orleans Seminary; Louis Zinc, Bay St. Louis, Pearl River Community College; Nathan Taylor, Laurel, MSU; Paul Chrestman Jr., Hernando, MC; Dylan Peeples, Greenwood, MC; Jason Courtney, Greenwood, MC; Chase Quarterman, Jackson, MC; Chad McCord, Blue Springs, MC; Randy Mayzak, Hancock County, USM; and Frank Simmons, GBA manager.

Staffers not pictured are Curt Skipper, Shuqualak, ECCC; Marcus Burge, Picayune, Pearl River Community College; Jamie Cockrell, Long Beach, Gulf Coast Community College, Jeff Davis campus; Katie Hubbard, Picayune, MSU; and Ryan Mumbower, Clinton, MSU.

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Garaywa staffers encounter full summer agenda

Camp Garaywa staffers for the just-completed 2000 summer season, which included many events filled to capacity, were (back row, from left) Jona Phillipson, Lena; Tara Jones, Corinth; Michelle Schultz, Lucedale; Lori Clark, Laurel; Candy Mitchell, Smithdale; Robynn Shubert, Poplarville; Jayna Anthony, Gatesville, Texas; Amy Medlin, Blue Mountain.

Third row, from left: Kelly Smallwood, Meadville; Brandi Jolly, New Albany; Robbie Orgeron, Nashville, Tenn.; Robin Keels, Brandon, camp director; Melinda Ulmer, Magee; Danielle Miles, Meridian; Jeanna Aultman, Sumrall; Julie Smith, Randolph, Vt.; Charity Gardner, Shelbyville, Ky.; Allyson Langford, Pearl;

Second row, from left: Ashley Bennett, Meridian; Mandy Mullins, Meadville; Erin Black, Sarah, assistant camp director; Kathryn Hill, Potts Camp; Dianne Lee, Crystal Springs; Allison Orman, Hickory Flat; Siobhan Pietruszewski, Pace, Fla.; Naomi Upton, Florence; Heather Robinson, Brandon; Mackenzie Montague, Sallis;

Front row, from left: Ashley McDill, Decatur; Rachel Michel, Brandon, assistant camp director; Lauren Wells, Beaumont; Laura Dufour, Madison; Leslie Bennett, Diamondhead; Keri Norwood, Hazlehurst; Lara May, Meridian; Kristie Lederman, West Helena, Ark.; Dana Oswalt, Mathiston; Ondrea Davis, Picayune; and Anita Goolsby, Ripley.



2000 Garaywa staff

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS • SEPTEMBER 17, 2000

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Participating in service

Acts 2:37-47

By Wayne VanHorn

Jesus had informed his disciples that "repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:47).

The same ministry Jesus had engaged in during his sojourn on earth was to be the ministry of the disciples. That ministry called for preparation, power, and participation.

Conviction (v. 37). True salvation begins with conviction of sin. Bringing people under conviction of sin is uniquely the role of the Holy Spirit (John 16:8).

Luke tells us that some in the audience on Pentecost Sunday were "cut to the heart." The term is used metaphorically of a pronounced mental agitation characterized chiefly by sorrow.

Far more than emotional upset is indicated. These men had heard Peter's sermon and how he used the Scripture to show that Jesus was the Messiah. They carefully followed Peter's reasoning, accepted his point of view, and came under great conviction of sin.

They inquired of the apostles, "What shall we do?" Under conviction of the Holy Spirit, they realized that they had to do something to amend for the guilt they had incurred in rejecting Jesus of Nazareth.

Peter's sermon would have been meaningless apart from the convicting power of the Holy Spirit at work in the minds and hearts of these men. The Spirit led them to see the error of their ways and to seek corrective guidance.



VanHorn

Conversion (vv. 38-41). Salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. Luke traveled with Paul and would have been thoroughly familiar with Paul's emphasis on salvation by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8-9).

Peter's answer to their question, "What must we do?" was basically: "Repent and be baptized" (v. 38). However, we cannot divorce this terse statement from the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith.

To repent means to change one's mind about sin, viewing it with great abhorrence. Repentance is the desired response to the convicting power of the Holy Spirit.

The alternative to repentance is rejection — what the Jews refer to as "hardening of the heart." Peter also told the men to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. The word "baptized" is derived from a Greek term meaning "to dip or to immerse."

Baptists have historically insisted that biblical baptism is for believers by full immersion. Infants cannot repent of sin and therefore should not be baptized. The insistence on immersion derives from applying the meaning of the Greek term "baptizo."

Peter indicated that the result of submission to Jesus was nothing less than "remission of sins." Once again, the words of Jesus in Luke 24:47 are reintroduced here demonstrating that the ministry of the apostles was a continuance of the ministry of Jesus.

When people respond to the prompting of the Holy Spirit, repent of sin, and turn to Jesus, God saves them! The Spirit baptizes them into the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13). Water baptism symbolizes — for all to see — the baptism of the Holy Spirit within the believer.

Being baptized by the Holy Spirit is not a blessing subsequent to salvation; it is salvation! None of us can be part of the body of Christ without the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Peter urged his audience to be saved. About three thousand souls were added to the church that day.

Ministries (vv. 42-47). What good is Christianity if it does not inspire its followers to participate in the ministry of Christ? That is the issue with which Luke deals in Acts 2:42-47.

Verse 42 is a general summary and provides excellent guidelines for the spiritual maturation process that follows salvation. Believers should devote themselves to learning doctrine, to fellowship, to breaking of bread (common meals and the Lord's Supper), and to prayer (worship).

Verses 43-47 describe a church which is happy in Jesus. They were characterized by a sense of "awe." They tended to each other's needs. They worshiped together in the Temple and shared meals at each other's homes.

This happy fellowship attracted new converts daily as the Spirit of God continued to empower the disciples to witness and as people were continually brought under conviction of their sins. We too can participate in the service of the Lord.

VanHorn is pastor of First Church, Columbia.

FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

How powerful is God?

1 Kings 18:1-46

By Heather Cumberland

How powerful is God? As we will see in 1 Kings 18, he is powerful enough to bring 850 pagans to their knees in reverence to him by using one ordinary man named Elijah. These prophets had gone astray and were going back and forth between worshipping God and manmade idols.

How many times do we sway between opinions? We straddle the fence because we are afraid that what we say or do may offend someone.

Elijah faced this problem with the prophets on Mount Carmel. Some of these men and women may have truly believed that these idols were as powerful as God. Others may have worshiped these idols

because "everyone else was doing it."

Elijah stood up to the prophets and told them to "quit hesitating between two opinions" and choose one — either the idols or God — to serve" (v. 21).

I have a deep respect for people who stand up for what they believe. Week after week I read stories in The Baptist Record about missionaries who put their lives on the line to share what they believe.

Just like present day missionaries, Elijah had a lot to lose, yet he stood for what he believed. He knew that his God was the only true God. Elijah was on top of Mount Carmel with 850 prophets who would kill him if his God did not show



Cumberland

himself to them that day.

So what did Elijah do? He sent a challenge to these people to set up an altar and call on their god to send a fire upon their sacrifice (vv. 23-24).

When Elijah thought they had had enough humiliation, he prepared his own altar. He did his a little differently, though.

He wanted to be sure that they knew his God was all-powerful.

He dug a trench around the altar and soaked it thoroughly with water. Once all of this was completed, he simply asked the Lord to answer his request so that all of the other prophets would know that God is a living and powerful God who answers his people (v. 37).

Immediately God sent a fire that consumed not only the animal sacrifice, but the wood and water as well.

We can learn several lessons from this passage. One could be "nanny, nanny, boo, boo." In other words, we could be spite-

ful and say that God used his power and really showed the prophets who was boss.

However, even though they were rebelling against him, God loved those prophets. He did not want to teach them a spiteful lesson, he simply wanted them to turn their hearts toward him again.

The point we should get from this lesson is to stand up for what you believe even if you are the only one to do so.

There are too many political leaders who make promises because they know that is what people want to hear. Often they do not keep their promises or they do exactly the opposite of what they had committed to do.

There are also church leaders who preach what the congregation wants to hear instead of what God wants to tell them. These leaders are afraid to speak out against sin in their church. I respect any pastor who will unapologetically preach the truth of God's Word to his congregation.

We worry too much about what people may think of us if we stand up for the Lord. Perhaps someone may think that we are too conservative and not open-minded enough. Wrong! If the Lord lays something on our heart, as he did Elijah's, and gives us instructions on how to carry it out, we must do so. Elijah did not let the fear of being the only one who believed in God's power stop him from glorifying God. Neither should we!

If you are the only person who asks the blessing before you eat lunch in the breakroom at work — do it anyway. If you are the only sports fan who stands up after the National Anthem to say The Lord's Prayer — stand up and do so.

If Christians do not begin now standing up for what we believe in, our right to stand up will soon be taken away.

Don't believe me? I remember a time when my teacher could lead our class in prayer.

Cumberland is advertising coordinator for The Baptist Record.

U.N. speakers decry efforts at conversion

WASHINGTON (BP) — The Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders failed to accomplish one of its main objectives in four days of meetings, but evidenced widespread opposition to efforts at religious conversion.

The summit, held partly at the United Nations General Assembly Hall in New York, was attended by about 800 religious leaders and 1,000 observers from nearly 100 countries. The meeting was designed to focus on conflict resolution and reconciliation, as well as poverty and the environment.

While a document on world peace was signed by many of the participants, the meeting failed to produce an advisory council to the United Nations, as forecast.

U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan rejected a request by summit organizers for an advisory body of religious and spiritual leaders to assist him, according to The Washington Post. Annan declined the recommendation because of a lack of details about the proposed council, an aide to the secretary general said, according to The Post.

Leaders of the summit, however, agreed to establish a steering committee to find ways to collaborate with the United Nations.

Meanwhile, pronouncements were voiced by speakers from different religious traditions against attempts to convert people to other religions, and they met with strong affirmation, reported a Southern Baptist representative and another evangelical Christian observer. Evangelicals especially would be targets for such sentiments, since they have sent missionaries throughout the world to proclaim the mes-

sage of salvation exclusively by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

On numerous occasions, there were "very negative comments regarding proselytization," said Ken Welborn of the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board.

Such declarations were met by "vigorous applause," said Richard Cizik, who represented the National Association of Evangelicals at the summit.

"That view was held by most of those at the conference," Cizik said. "What I think was also unfortunate was that the representatives of Christianity were joining that same call to denounce proselytizing, in particular Joan Brown Campbell. She came out with a strong statement that proselytizing must be renounced."

"The irony is the U.N. charter documents affirm the right of people to change their religious beliefs," she said.

Campbell is the former general secretary of the National Council of Churches, a coalition primarily made up of liberal Protestant denominations.

"Some of the most rousing applause" during the summit came when CNN founder Ted Turner denied the "need for a blood sacrifice," Welborn said. "[I]t was a sad comment, a very sad comment."

The only evangelical representative on the program was Anne Graham Lotz, who "essentially gave a gospel presentation," said Cizik.

The "weakest representation" at the summit was from conservative Christianity, said Welborn, NAMB's director of Christian ministries to the United Nations community.

"The focus was mostly on Eastern religions," he said.

"If the indigenous religions in Africa, the Hindus in India and others" are concerned about proselytization by Christians and others, "they certainly didn't get an opportunity to dialogue with those groups because so few evangelicals were invited," Cizik said.

The purpose of the summit was positive, Welborn and Cizik said.

The potential for future conflict between religious groups needs to be addressed, Cizik said, "but I don't think you can achieve that objective by excluding those who should be included, notably evangelicals, nor by calls against proselytizing."

In addition to Christianity, other religious movements represented at the summit included Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Ba'hai, Confucianism, Shinto, Taoism and Zoroastrianism.

The document on peace circulated among religious leaders included a commitment to pursue peace in collaboration with the United Nations, as well as:

- the promotion of "the equitable distribution of wealth within nations and among nations;"
- a call for the "universal abolition of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction;"
- the development of a "global reforestation campaign."

The summit, as well as another U.N. meeting, has resulted in concern among at least some conservative Christians about progress toward a one-world government (see article below).

Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx
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C KNU LWGGCKMGNKX
B PBQN HKXW TWH,
XACX TN SWQN WKN
CKWXANZ; CE B ACQN
SWQNM TWH, XACX TN
CSEW SWQN WKN
CKWXANZ.

DWAK XABZXNNK:

XABZXT-OWHZ

Clue: S = L

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Luke Nine: Twenty-Three.

Global tax, court proposals stirring controversy

NEW YORK (BP) — A small group of policy experts will be watching the actions of the United Nations Millennium Summit for further evidence of what one analyst described to CNSNews.com as a "frightening" push for global governance. The leaders of more than 150

nations converged in New York Sept. 6 to iron out details of their Charter for Global Democracy, also called Charter 99.

The U.N. Internet site indicates the charter includes "12 areas for urgent action" to be discussed, CNSNews.com reported on its Internet news site.

Those topics fall under four headings: strengthening international democracy, creating a full-time international security force, furthering human rights causes and promoting higher standards of living for all.

Supporters of the charter want the ability to "monitor and regulate international corporations and financial institutions," "give UN institutions additional ... revenue;" "ratify the international criminal court" proposal; and "create an international environmental court."

Most alarming to critics are the U.N. recommendations to create a global taxing system, establish an international court, and eliminate any allowance for Permanent Member Status and veto power in the Security Council, privileges that the United States and several other countries currently enjoy.

Henry Lamb, executive vice president of the Environmental Conservative Organization and a member of the nonprofit Sovereignty International agency, told CNSNews.com he has studied and analyzed the actions of the United Nations for the past several years — and what impact their policies would have on the United States.

"This is frightening," Lamb said, referring to the U.N. push to abolish veto power and Permanent Member Status in its Security Council. "It is one of the last means of control that the U.S. has over the U.N."

"When you combine that rec-

ommendation with the global taxing proposals... and international criminal courts," he said, "we see the U.N. is posturing itself to have not only the authority but the means to implement and enforce national policy."

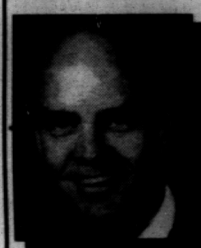
The U.N. can create such a system of global governance even without the approval of the U.S., Lamb said, by gaining the support of other "heads of nations and the U.N. Security Council." The United States, if it fails to comply, would then open itself to sanctions from other countries, he continued.

Any debate over whether the United States would comply willingly with portions or all of the Charter 99 proposals may be a moot point, Lamb and another U.N. analyst said, pointing to U.S. House Resolution 4453.

The resolution, introduced by Rep. James P. McGovern, (D.-Mass.), in May and officially titled the United Nations Rapid Deployment Police and Security Act of 2000, seeks to "establish a UN... police and security force under the authority of the Security Council that is trained to standardized objectives," recruits force members and provides "reliable funding."

The security force, as suggested by McGovern and outlined in his bill, would include up to 6,000 volunteers from U.N. nations who would act as rapid deployment peacekeepers and human rights enforcers.

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Ron Mumbower, Ph.D.
Minister of Counseling
First Church, Jackson

LifeAnswers

Our niece is getting married soon. She and her fiancé have been living together for over two years, and alcohol will be served at the rehearsal dinner and reception. Should we attend?

A wedding is not the place to make a statement. Of course you would never condone them living together or drinking, but they didn't ask your permission. They are, however, requesting your attendance. What if, because of your presence in their lives and abiding prayer support, that after a couple of years they begin to attend church, come face to face with their decisions, repent, and turn their lives around? They need Christian

encouragement and role-modeling. Enjoy the wedding. Fellowship with your friends. Undoubtedly, someone will be watching and will be glad to see the stand you are taking.

My spouse wants a "caboose" — one last baby before our child-bearing years are over. I'm not interested, but the pressure is mounting. What should I do?

Talk together about the pros and cons of this decision. Spend concentrated time in prayer. Find the real reasons for wanting another child. Don't try to make this a logical decision — there is really no such thing when it comes to matters

like this. You don't have to argue; talk with each other and pray about it until a peace descends upon you. Visit other couples who have done what you are considering. Look at the effects on the older children, the marriage, finances, etc. Finally, look at yourselves and see how well you are dealing with pressures right now. If you added another child at this point, what would that do to the issues with which you are struggling right now? Here is an excellent opportunity for the two of you to increase your prayer life and communication with each other. Make this a growth tool in your marriage that will carry with it many satisfying ramifications.

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. In central Mississippi, Ron Mumbower can be heard from 9-10 a.m. each Wednesday on WHJT-FM 93.5. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.